Recently, I found myself reading Jordan Peterson's piece in the National Post about why boomers (and older Canadians in general) seem to be disproportionately attracted to Mark Carney. And although there are many important insights to be found in that piece, one particular passage stood out to me:

> Consider the persona of our prime minister, rather than his actual continually stated and written views. He is grey-haired, calm, sensible, a bit peevish in a manner of a wise father who's simply been asked too

> many stupid questions — the very image of 1990s (or even 1950s) reliable patriarchy. He is Mark J. Carney, after all, banker, economist, former governor of the Banks of Canada and England — a man vetted by our betters; a man of international cachet and renown. Could there possibly be a better symbol of the essentially conservative desire of mature old age and judgement? Who better to stand forth against the imprecations of Donald J. Who better to put forward the eternal vision of Peace, Order and Good Government still so dear to central and Atlantic Canada's establishment heart?

Mark Carney—at least superficially—presents as a calm, collected, and fundamentally boring man who will be a steady hand at the wheel during tough times. This persona, hollow as it may be, has a "small-c conservative" appeal to it, and is incredibly attractive to boomers who simply want to escape the chaos of the current moment and return to the "end of history" comfort and stability of the 1990s.

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And in an era of vibes-based politics, this persona may be enough to win them over.

Compare this to the persona of U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer, a man with whom Carney recently met and has much in common with:

> Members of Sir Keir Starmer's shadow cabinet have warned the Labour leader that he is 'boring voters to death' as a separate poll revealed voters feel he is 'bland but honest'.
>
> A wordcloud reveals the term people most associated with Keir is “boring” - racking up 5.3 per cent of all responses.
>
> When one polling firm, JL Partners, recently quizzed members of the public on the adjectives they’d use to describe Starmer, the most common answer was “boring”, although “dull”, “uninspiring” and “bland” also featured.

Purely based on vibes alone, Starmer seems remarkably similar to Carney. And if you judged him solely off of vibes, you would expect him

to be running a competent—yet uninspiring—technocratic centrist government.

However, anyone who has been following UK politics as of late knows that is anything but the case.

Here is a quote from a article about how Starmer's popularity—and the popularity of his Labour party—have sharply declined in the months following his landslide election win:

> Imperious decisions from the Chancellor Rachel Reeves about the winter fuel allowance and a bumper tax-raising budget have been accompanied by Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson implementing unabashed woke leftism in the education sector, Energy Secretary Ed Miliband going full Greta Thunberg on energy policy and Foreign Secretary David Lammy masterminding an apologies-and-reparations regime at the Foreign Office.
>
> Thousands of convicted felons have been released from jail early, and Prisons Minister Lord Timpson is seeking to tilt the criminal justice

> system towards non-custodial sentences. After scrapping the Rwanda deterrent plan, Labour has presided over a further increase in small-boat crossings.

Doesn't sound very centrist to me. But alas, there is more.

Thanks to the UK's censorship laws, the police there arrest an average of 33 people per day for "hate speech" offences. This number, while shocking to many, is apparently too low for Keir Starmer, who has mused about extending speech restrictions even further to outlaw "Islamophobia".

And, after the infamous grooming gang scandal was brought to international attention in recent months, Starmer refused to launch a national inquiry into the issue—instead accusing those who brought the issue to light of "spreading misinformation" and "jumping on the far-right bandwagon".

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Carney's True Colours

A good start in terms of exposing Carney would be to examine what he thought about the Freedom Convoy. In an op-ed in the Globe and Mail on February 7, 2022, Carney says that those involved in the Convoy were committing "sedition" and expresses support for the invocation of the Emergencies Act:

> But now in its second week, no one should have any doubt. This is sedition. That's a word I never thought I'd use in Canada. It means "incitement of resistance to or insurrection against lawful authority."
>
> On Sunday, authorities began to draw the line. Declaring a state of emergency was the right thing to do.

He then goes on to endorse the freezing of bank accounts for those who donated to the Convoy:

> Those who are still helping to extend this occupation must be identified and punished to the full force of the law.

> Drawing the line means choking off the money that financed this occupation. Again, many Canadians who were amongst the initial donors were likely well meaning. Perhaps they were unaware of the convoy's stated objectives, or – like many in positions of authority in Ottawa – they didn't take them seriously. Perhaps all they wanted was a new COVID-19 policy with fewer restrictions.
>
> But by now anyone sending money to the convoy should be in no doubt: You are funding sedition. Foreign funders of an insurrection interfered in our domestic affairs from the start. Canadian authorities should take every step within the law to identify and thoroughly punish them. The involvement of foreign governments and any officials connected to them should be identified, exposed and addressed.

Yikes.

Other evidence of Carney's authoritarian inclinations can be found in comments he made recently on the question of internet censorship:

> “There are many serious issues that we’re dealing with,” he said. “One of them is the sea of misogyny, antisemitism, hatred, and conspiracy theories — this sort of pollution online that washes over our virtual borders from the United States.”
>
> “The more serious thing is when it affects how people behave — when Canadians are threatened going to their community centres or their places of worship or their school or, God forbid, when it affects our children,” he said.
>
> “My government, if we are elected, will be taking action.”

On the face of it, some of what he says here —such as the part concerning threats to places of worship—seems reasonable. However, the line about “taking action” likely means that his government, if re-elected, would revive and pass Bill C-63.

If you don’t remember, Bill C-63 is the draconian censorship bill that could lead to life sentences for “hate speech”:

Offence motivated by hatred

320.1001 (**1**) Everyone who commits an offence under this Act or any other Act of Parliament, if the commission of the offence is motivated by hatred based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression, is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for life.

The bill also prescribed placing people under house arrest and making them wear an "electronic monitoring device" if there is a reason to suspect that they will commit a "hate speech" offence in the future:

Fear of hate propaganda offence or hate crime

810.012 (1) A person may, with the Attorney General's consent, lay an information before a provincial court judge if the person fears on reasonable grounds that another person will commit

- (**a**) an offence under section 318 or any of subsections 319(1) to (2.1); or
- (**b**) an offence under section 320.1001.

Appearances

(2) The provincial court judge who receives the information may cause the parties to appear before a provincial court judge.

Adjudication

(3) If the provincial court judge before whom the parties appear is satisfied by the evidence adduced that the informant has reasonable grounds for the fear, the judge may order that the defendant enter into a recognizance to keep the peace and be of good behaviour for a period of not more than 12 months.

Duration extended

(4) However, if the provincial court judge is also satisfied that the defendant was convicted previously of any offence referred to in subsection (1), the judge may order that the defendant enter into the recognizance for a period of not more than two years.

Refusal to enter into recognizance

(5) The provincial court judge may commit the defendant to prison for a term of not more than 12 months if the defendant fails or refuses to enter into the recognizance.

Conditions in recognizance

(6) The provincial court judge may add any reasonable conditions to the recognizance that the judge considers desirable to secure the good conduct of the defendant, including conditions that require the defendant to

- (**a**) wear an electronic monitoring device, if the Attorney General makes that request;
- (**b**) return to and remain at their place of residence at specified times;
- (**c**) abstain from the consumption of drugs, except in accordance with a medical prescription, of alcohol or of any other intoxicating substance;
- (**d**) provide, for the purpose of analysis, a sample of a bodily substance prescribed by regulation on the demand of a peace officer, a probation officer or someone designated under paragraph 810.3(2)(a) to make a demand, at the place and time and on the day specified by the person making the demand, if that person has reasonable grounds to believe that the defendant has breached a condition of the recognizance that requires them to abstain from the consumption of drugs, alcohol or any other intoxicating substance;
- (**e**) provide, for the purpose of analysis, a sample of a bodily substance prescribed by regulation at regular intervals that are specified, in a notice in Form 51 served on the defendant, by a probation officer or a person designated under paragraph 810.3(2)(b) to specify them, if a condition of the recognizance requires the defendant to abstain from the consumption of drugs, alcohol or any other intoxicating substance; or

- (**f**) abstain from communicating, directly or indirectly, with any person identified in the recognizance, or refrain from going to any place specified in the recognizance, except in accordance with the conditions specified in the recognizance that the judge considers necessary.

In terms of finding evidence of Carney's radicalism, his book *Value(s)* is a treasure trove. Here is an excerpt from a National Post review of his book in 2021:

> Carney draws inspiration from, among others, Marx, Engels and Lenin, but the agenda he promotes differs from Marxism in two key respects. First, the private sector is not to be expropriated but made a "partner" in reshaping the economy and society. Second, it does not make a promise to make the lives of ordinary people better, but worse. Carney's Brave New World will be one of severely constrained choice, less flying, less meat, more inconvenience and more poverty: "Assets will be stranded, used gasoline powered cars will be unsaleable, inefficient properties will be unrentable," he promises.

Marx, Engels, and Lenin, eh?

Naturally, Carney also heaps praise on Greta Thunberg in the book:

> Carney also commends the knowledge and wisdom of Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg: "The power of Greta Thunberg's message lies in the way she drives home both the cold logic of climate physics and the fundamental unfairness of the climate crisis."
>
> Anybody who cites an anxious 17-year-old as an authority on climate science and moral philosophy should be an object of deep suspicion, but then, according to Carney, climate science is easy. Greta's "basic calculations" are ones that she could "easily master and powerfully project." (Carney says he once gave Greta a tour of the Bank of England's gold vaults. One wonders if she also offered up tips on monetary policy.) But then, in early 2020, Greta demonstrated her complete disconnect from reality when, at the WEF in Davos, she called for an immediate cessation of emissions, which would tank the world economy and potentially kill millions.

It is a rather curious choice to heap praise on someone who calls for an "immediate cessation of emissions". But, after all, a "net zero" agenda is a key element of Carney's political project.

In addition, Carney made headlines a few weeks ago for adding Mark Wiseman, co-founder of the Century Initiative, to his Canada-U.S. relations advisory council[1]. The Century, for those who are unaware, is an organization that seeks to increase Canada's population to 100 million by 2100 (the beginning of the 22nd century, hence the name). Since Canada's native population has a low birthrate, achieving this goal would necessitate sustained mass immigration for the next 75 years—a process that would likely lead to tanking GDP per capita numbers and further cultural balkanization in urban and suburban areas.

By now, I think the point is clear.

Keir Starmer and Mark Carney both give off a bland-yet-competent vibe. Based on this vibe, one would expect them to govern cautiously and moderately. Yet that vibe is, indeed, just a vibe; it carefully conceals a penchant for a sort of technocratic soft authoritarianism that seeks to

punish anyone who deviates from boilerplate left-liberal groupthink and orthodoxy.

The worldview that both of these men share view dissent, skepticism of officialdom and institutions, and divergent opinions as things that, at best, are nuisances to be barely tolerated—at worst, they are, like the Freedom Convoy, to be "identified and punished to the full force of the law".

To them, democracy works best when the power of the unwashed masses is weakened and replaced by "experts" in the managerial state, such as unelected judges, bureaucrats, and workers at NGOs. Giving the plebians too much power, after all, could result in those simpletons falling for "harmful disinformation"—or even worse—"far-right populism".

They have a deeply condescending attitude towards common people, seeing them as being "uneducated" and "ignorant"—people in need of a large, paternalistic government that controls every aspect of their lives

and guides them towards the “correct” choices, even if those choices lead to a lower quality of life.

One of the most famous quotations from George Orwell’s 1984 is “if you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face—forever”. The boot in this analogy clearly symbolizes an extreme and uncompromising form of totalitarianism, one that resembles Stalin’s USSR or Mao’s China.

When it comes to the possibility of Mark Carney being elected, I would simply change Orwell’s quote to say “if you want a picture of the future, imagine the dress shoe of a central banker walking on the faces of Canadians for the next four years”.

Being walked on by a dress shoe may not hurt nearly as much as being stomped on by a boot. It is a softer tyranny, after all. But it still hurts. It is still an experience you probably want to avoid.

And, in the coming days, Canadians should think carefully about whether they are masochists who desire that experience—or if they sensibly want to avoid it.

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